The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

No. 37. JULY, 1910. PRICE ONE PENNY. 1s. 6d. per annum, post free.

Contents.

	PAGE
Notes of the Month	1
Remonstrant Synod of Ulster	2
The Association	2
The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland	3
Conference at Moneyrea—Papers by Miss F. Davidson, Mr. F. J. Orr, and Rev. J. Worthington	4
Reports.—Ballyhemlin ; Belfast : Mountpottinger ; Belfast : Stanhope Street ; Comber ; Dublin ; Holywood ; Unity Guild	8
Echoes	10
Baptism	11
Marriage	11

Notes of the Month.

THE following letter, signed by Sir James B. Dougherty, Dublin Castle, has been received by the Clerk (Rev. J. A. Kelly) —" I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to inform you that the resolution adopted by the Executive Committee of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland has been laid before his Majesty King George V., who has commanded his Excellency to thank the members of the Church for their expression of profound sympathy with the Royal family in their great affliction, and for their assurance of affectionate loyalty."

* * *

After Morning Service on Sunday, 29th May, the "Call" to the Rev. Ellison A. Voysey, M.A., required by the Code of Discipline of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, was signed by members of the congregation in All Souls' Church. The "Installation" will take place in September or October, and the exact date will be mentioned later on. It was found that no convenient day in June could be arranged for the ceremony, and as many members of the congregation, as well as local ministers, will probably be away on holidays in July and August, it has been thought better to postpone the installation until September or October.

Mr. Voysey, however, will be in charge of the congregation from 1st July.

* * *

The Annual Conference of Sunday School teachers of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland was held at Moneyrea on Saturday, 4th June, and judging by the large numbers in attendance, and by the heartiness which characterised all the proceedings, the Conference has lost none of its interest for our people. The three papers read by Miss F. Davidson, Belfast ; Mr. F. J. Orr, Comber ; and Rev. J. Worthington Belfast, were in every way worthy of the occasion, and if the subsequent discussion did, by a time, display a tendency to wander, it was nevertheless mostly of an interesting nature and there was more of it than at previous Conferences. The substitution of three short papers for one long one has proved a distinct

gain, and if, on future occasions, the three can be reduced to two and still kept short, the requirements of the case will, we think, be fully met. It was quite evident at Moneyrea that there is not time enough in one afternoon for three papers ; and more particularly so when friends, coming together from various quarters, are desirous of renewing old acquaintanceships, and having a chat over a comfortable cup of tea. The social side of the Conference is worthy of consideration and we sincerely trust this fact will not be lost sight of. At Moneyrea nothing was lacking except time to make the most of all our opportunities. Mr. Bennett, a member of the congregation, kindly supplied an excellent tea for all-comers, over 400 partaking thereof, and the Moneyrea friends are to be congratulated on the hearty and business-like manner in which they rose to the occasion and ministered to the wants of their guests.

REMONSTRANT SYNOD OF ULSTER.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Eighty-first Annual Meeting of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster met at noon on 21st June, in the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast. The Moderator (Rev. Edgar Lockett) constituted the Synod by prayer, the usual service with sermon being discontinued in view of a subsequent service and sermon in connection with the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The Clerk called the roll, after which the Rev. Joseph Worthington was unanimously elected Moderator. Mr. Lockett on retiring thanked the members for the assistance and courtesy which he had received from them on every occasion during the past two years, and Mr. Worthington returned thanks for the honour conferred upon him. The Finance Report was received and adopted. The usual votes of thanks having been passed the various presbyteries submitted their reports. These reports having been received Rev. A. Turner moved, Principal Gordon seconded, and it was unanimously agreed : "That, provided the Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland directs its Presbyteries to report annually to said Synod, then our Presbyteries shall so report, and not report to the Remonstrant Synod." On the question of temperance Mr. John Smith moved : "That in view of the widespread evil and suffering caused by the excessive use of alcoholic liquors, and having regard to the danger to all classes, and specially to the young and inexperienced, this Synod recommends to members of congregations connected with it the desirability of adopting total abstinence, both as the safest attitude for themselves and as that which will render their influence most beneficial to the general community ; that the Synod rejoices in the forward movement manifested in regard to the temperance cause. They welcome the successful work accomplished by the Catch-my-Pal movement, and wish Godspeed to the leaders in all the churches who are carrying on its good work." Rev. A. Turner, in seconding, said they were all greatly interested in the spread of temperance, and it had been a usual thing for them in the past to record their feeling in the matter when met in the Synod. They could speak with a stronger voice on that great matter in the future through the new church body. Some routine business having reference to trusteeships brought the session to a close.

THE ASSOCIATION OF IRISH NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS AND OTHER FREE CHRISTIANS.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE annual meeting of the above Association was held on 22nd June, in First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street. The chair was occupied byRev. J. J. Magill (president), and there was a large attendance of members.

X288.4
N749
1910-13

The roll having been called, Rev. J. J. Magill (president), Rev. J. Kennedy (hon. sec.), and Rev. J. A. Kelly (hon. treasurer) were re-elected, and expressed their thanks to the members of the Association for their reappointment to the respective offices.

A series of reports of committees were received, and it was decided to transmit them to the meeting of the Synod. The financial statement was presented and moved by Rev. J. A. Kelly, and the motion was seconded by Rev. George J. Slipper, and passed.

The report of the Orphan Society was submitted by Rev. Alfred Turner, who moved its adoption. The report contained the following :—"The income from all sources for the year ending 31st March amounts to the sum of £384 16s. 7d. which is made up as follows :—viz., subscriptions, £196 4s.; bank interest, £4 0s. 9d.; dividends on invested moneys £179 5s. 7d.; grant from the Lord Enniskillen Memorial Orphan Fund, £4 4s.; and a donation from the Moneyrea Good Templar Lodge, £1 2s. 3d. Adding the balance of £407 15s. 5d. brought forward from the previous account, and the sum of £16 14s. refunded income tax for three years to April, 1909, we get a sum total for the year of £809 6s. There is carried forward as balance to next account the sum of £261 12s. 5d.; the expenses for the year amount to £23 13s. 1d.; and the sum of £277 has been paid in grants to orphans. A purchase of £300 Belfast Water Commissioners three per cent. stock at 81½ was made, which, with brokerage, cost £247 0s. 6d. At the date of the last annual report there were fifty-eight orphans on the fund. These were re-elected. In October, 1909, twelve orphans were elected to the benefits of the Society, and, as during the year eight passed off the books, the number of orphans now under your care is sixty-two. The position of inspector of the society having been rendered vacant by the death of Mr. William Davidson, J.P., of Rademon, the Governors nominated Mr. J. R. Miniss, J.P., of Dromore, a nomination which we are glad to say resulted in appointment."

Mr. John Rogers seconded the motion, and the report was passed. Rev. W. S. Smith, Rev. Edgar Lockett, Dr. Gawin Orr, and Mr. William M'Robert were appointed Governors in room of those retiring.

The proceedings, after the consideration of various matters of detail, came to a close.

NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND.

A BUSINESS meeting in connection with the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland was held on 22nd June, the Moderator (Rev. William Napier) presiding. The minutes of the inaugural meeting were read by Rev. J. A. Kelly, and were confirmed.

Principal Gordon proposed the reappointment of Mr. Napier as Moderator. They felt it an honour to them as a body to have him at their head. He trusted he would see his way to consent to be Moderator for the ensuing year.

Rev. J. J. Magill seconded the motion.

Rev. William Napier said he would rather they would appoint someone else for the ensuing twelve months. They would have matters to attend to which he would not be able to preside over, and he suggested they should appoint a younger man in his place.

Rev. J. Kennedy said it was evidently the wish of the whole Church that Mr. Napier should continue to hold office as Moderator. (Applause.)

The resolution was passed, and Rev. Mr. Napier said the attitude of the members of the Church to him was at present what it had always been. During a ministry of fifty-five years he had always enjoyed the kindly regard and the good feeling of his co-religionists.

Rev. J. A. Kelly was then appointed clerk, Mr. John Rogers treasurer, and the members of the General Purposes Committee were elected.

Principal Gordon moved that the report transmitted from the Association

23881

of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians be received, adopted, and printed. Proceeding, he said the understanding of course was that in future subjects which had entered into the report of the General Purposes Committee of the Association would be taken up by the General Purposes Committee of the Synod.

Rev. W. G. Marsden presented the Sunday-schools report.

The Temperance Committee's report was presented by Rev. G. J. Slipper.

The following committee was appointed to draw up a draft form of a trust deed in connection with the proposed Sustentation Fund of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland and that the same Committee be requested to take immediate steps to collect subscriptions for the said fund. Revs. J. Kennedy, J. A. Kelly, H. J. Rossington, J. Worthington, G. L. Phelps, Alfred Turner, E. S. Hicks, E. Lockett; the Right Hon. Thomas Andrews; Messrs. J. W. M'Ninch, Omar C. Nelson, F. J. Orr, John Mulligan, W. J. Baxter, Dr. Campbell, John Smyth, John Rogers, James Davidson (Windsor), Thomas Lindsay, James Rankin, and A. Shannon Millen, with Rev. J. Worthington as convener.

The proceedings terminated.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL CONFERENCE AT MONEYREA.

THIS Conference was held at Moneyrea on Saturday, 4th June, the Moderator, the Rev. William Napier, presiding. After a few preliminary remarks by the Moderator, Rev. M. Watkins opened with hymn and prayer. In the discussion which followed upon the reading of the papers, Miss Lindsay, Miss Mellone, the Revs. A. Turner, H. J. Rossington, G. L. Phelps, M. S. Dunbar, Messrs. J. Steele, A. K. Stewart and others took part.

ADDRESS BY MISS F. DAVIDSON.

If there is no royal road to learning, neither is there one to teaching, even to teaching in the uncertificated and go-as-you-please fashion which most Sunday Schools are still wise enough to admit. One learns, here as everywhere, by one's many failures and rare successes. Speaking, as I suppose, altogether to a gathering of fellow-teachers, most of them of wider experience than my own, I want to confine myself to the subject of Beginnings in Sunday School work, and to look at the matter a little from the standpoint both of the teacher and of the taught. I have in mind a class of from anything teachable up to about 12, and the diffident teacher who generally takes the lowest class or two of a school.

This is not at all such a modest choice of subject as it may seem on the surface. "Well begun," as we wrote in our copybooks, "is half done." "The first step is the one that costs." "Every wall is as strong as its foundation." It positively rains proverbs and saws on this subject of beginnings, and no one will deny either that the best way of reaching any chosen point is to make a bee-line for it. But I suppose even bees might conceivably be carried a little out of their straight course either by stress of weather or lie of country, and we have to follow what seems a practicable outline of work, rather than any counsel of perfection.

To begin at the end, suppose we teachers ask ourselves first and foremost, what do we expect to do, what do we intend to do, what are we trying to do, by this work of ours in Sunday School? In the end, surely, we aim at sending out from our Unitarian Sunday Schools boys and girls who will have knowledge of Unitarian Christianity, belief in it, and conviction of its value, sufficient to lead them straight to the work and membership of our Unitarian churches? And in the middle, to attain that, we must aim at teaching positive Christianity, which is morality and idealism; at explaining comparative Christianity, which is the main points of variance in the generally-accepted creeds; and at fostering in the scholars a reasoned choice of superlative Christianity, which for us is Unitarianism. But in the beginning, though we are working towards all that, most of it is very far ahead, and to teach morality and idealism is generally to tackle as big a piece of work as teacher and class are likely to do any good at.

Now, having defined our subject, what will help us to the study of it? "Bible Stories" are, I suppose, the Sunday School alphabet, they are the teacher's great stand by with the very little ones, and even the next in size are inclined to demand them as their right. And they are useful stuff for foundation, with a very few exceptions. Take the list of those in general use, and you will find that where the teacher needs to use selection is rather in the detail than in the story. A child's taste in detail is generally frankly barbarian. Joseph's reputation has been made more by the pit, and the coat of many colours, and the blood of the slaughtered kid, than by his later wisdom and prosperity, or by his father's mourning and affection, or by his final forgive-

ness of the jealous brothers. The leprosies of Naaman and Gehazi, and the temptation of the king's gifts, make a readier impression than the simple faith required for the healing, or the goodwill shown by the little captive Israelite towards her masters. The outstanding point in the history of David is that he not only slays Goliath, but that he cuts his head right off. I never knew a child, who had once heard the usual version, miss that point in repeating it.

But even with that, the story of David and Goliath is a useful one. It is in spirit very like a part of our great Ulster epic, the Tain, where the youth Cuchullin sets himself single-handed to hold the gates of Ulster against the Connaught hosts until relief can come to him. Both tales are speciously tricked out with ferocities, but both are founded on a high and simple courage of youth. The teacher, the interpreter, can call the halt at the right places.

I am inclined to place special importance on this careful teaching of the Old Testament stories, because it is for me the only use of the Old Testament in the beginnings of Sunday School teaching. It gives the children, at second-hand, as much biblical history as will interest or help them, but as soon as a child can read for itself, then the time has come for the New Testament and the New Testament only.

I believe thoroughly here in giving a first-hand and almost a word-for-word acquaintance with the English text. That naturally means giving almost a word-for-word translation into our ordinary phrasing, and this in turn may fix clearly in the child's mind both the sense and the form of what is being read. So we store in our memories not only the worthy thought, but the worthy garment of the thought, and the finer ring of the familiar words is apt to bring it more often uppermost. I do not of course mean that we teachers may ignore the Old Testament, either as literature or as inspiration, but that for the scholars it is only valuable at a much more advanced stage. It is a very exceptional teacher who can usefully spare time from the whole of the four Gospels, part of the Acts, and most of the Epistles, to study with children under twelve even the wisdom of Proverbs or the lyrical worship of the Psalms. Both the latter, though, have an occasional place in the hymn-category. All properly constituted children like to learn hymns, and since the grandest and noblest of our hymns are no harder to commit to memory than the poorer ones, it is worse than waste of time to choose any but the best.

I have found with my own class that even on the first reading of such hymns as " When Spring unlocks the flowers," " God is Love," " In the cross of Christ I glory," " Prayer is the soul's sincere desire ". . . . . the mere form very clearly pleases and impresses, while by explaining and talking-over the matter of the verse, giving it to the children in simplified prose, and getting it back from them again in their own ideas and phrases, there is gained the opportunity of giving a helpful lesson which a line of the hymn, heard or remembered at any time, may readily bring back to mind.

I am very convinced of the value of hymn-learning, but I am not at all so sure about the use of a catechism in the beginning. The simplest catechism which we use in our schools is hardly simple enough, or perhaps vague enough, for very young children. If it is to be taught properly it takes upon itself too close a likeness to week day lessons, and even brings in a flavour of examinations from which these classes are best kept free

Stories are so easy for the teacher . . . . . stories of a high ideal and stories with a moral, of which so many are written and prepared for us, and so many come in our own general reading and experiences . . . . . these are so easy and so tempting to use that it is quite possible some of us over-use them. But there is a pretty broad margin before it comes to that. A story cannot make the whole lesson but a story suited to the lesson may make a child unconsciously develop for itself, out of class, whatever train of thought it has been consciously made to follow in class. Indeed to keep as nearly as possible on story lines all through is not only the easiest teaching, but it is the easiest learning. It is after all the broad method of illustration, and the very sense of that word makes it too important to be neglected. Every mind-picture with an ideal, every incident with a moral, helps to " let in light " upon the morality and idealism we are trying to teach in Sunday School as elementary Christianity.

After this profession of belief in the value of story-telling I feel I must use one story as an illustration before closing this paper, and here it is :—

" One day my class and I, in the middle of our New Testament reading, stumbled upon the formidable and apparently unfamiliar word ' patriarch.' Explanations led naturally back to Abraham and Isaac, to a little of their history, to some of the tribal and national customs, to what is known of the ways of life and thought by which they acted . . . . . in fact, the closing bell rang just as we got back to the verse we really had in hand. At the next lesson, I asked casually for any information any one might have about Abraham, and the quickest child in the class promptly started off with . . . . " Please, he was a Partridge." Now, I had some doubts after that lesson, as to whether I had not been simply wasting the children's time, and you may think that answer would confirm them but it did not, because the boy went on to give me clearly and shortly just what I had meant to tell him about Abraham, neither more nor less. He had only confused either the look or the sound of two unfamiliar words. And the application of that story to Beginnings is that we teachers of the younger classes need not be too easily discouraged as to the results of our

work. If we only aim at giving the right meaning of what we teach, it will be easy for those who come after to give it the proper name.

ADDRESS BY MR. F. J. ORR.

Mr. Moderator, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It seems to me that, roughly speaking, Sunday School work may be dealt with under two heads : 1st—In its relation to the church, and 2nd, in its relation to the scholar. As to the 1st, namely—the relation of the Sunday School to the Church, we Unitarians, or, must I now say Non-Subscribing Presbyterians ? all delight, I think, to see good attendances at our churches. Now the Sunday School is all-important as acting as a feeder to the church and as such its usefulness cannot be over-estimated. The mere habit of turning out every Sunday morning to Sunday School as a child is as a consequence nearly always followed by a good attendance at church in later years, and where the Sunday School is a success the church is rarely a failure. I am not by any means a believer in the demonstratively religious person, but one often finds that those who have a rather busy and I might say successful life yet find sufficient time to take an active interest in, and give a helping hand with Sunday School work. We always find that teachers, and those who interest themselves in the Sunday School, are the most staunch and loyal friends of the Church during their entire lives. One cannot fail to be struck by the fact that other denominations seek to use the Day School so as to assist the church, and they are, to an ever-increasing extent, securing the control of secular education in this country. Their church buildings are now considered incomplete without a National School alongside. One indeed sometimes finds the church a mere temporary erection—speaking from a structural point of view—while the adjoining Day School buildings are of an altogether substantial and permanent character. I am convinced that we as a body have not followed up this movement to the same extent as other churches, though I am glad to say that in this respect Moneyrea congregation is an honourable exception, living up to the ideals of the poet when he says—

" For well she keeps her ancient stock,
The stubborn strength of Pilgrim Rock ;
And still maintains, with milder laws
And clearer light, the good old cause !

Nor heeds the sceptics puny hands,
While near her school the church-spire stands;
Nor fears the blinded bigots rule,
While near her church-spire stands the School.

Now in regard to the second part, namely : The relation of the Sunday School to the scholar, I think I cannot do better than quote the words of a celebrated man connected with our Church, though spoken a very many years ago. He says :—" Now what is the end of the Sunday School ? The great end is to waken the soul of the pupil, to bring his understanding conscience and heart into earnest, vigorous action on religious and moral truth, to excite and cherish in him the spiritual life." Now my own ideas as to the style of teaching, in the younger classes at any rate, is that I would advocate that practical every day subjects be chosen so as to show the children how to profit by their own experience and see in the various happenings of life lessons to be learnt. I would not advocate an exclusive use of purely religious books. There are many secular works of every day interest which could with advantage be used in junior classes. To gain the confidence and excite the interest of the junior scholars is the proper ground work. By this means their attendance as years go on is assured, and the higher religious ideas can be pushed to the front later. The teacher should take an interest in the pupils outside the school and visit them occasionally, especially when unwell. In this way the parents become aware as to the efforts of the teacher. The teacher who can gain the respect and even love of the children is often of more real service than one more highly grounded in Biblical lore, or skilled in theological straw-splitting.

I think on this subject I cannot do better than again quote from the source already mentioned :—" Never forget that the child is a rational, moral, free being, and that the great end of education is to awaken rational and moral energy within him, and to lead him to the free choice of the Right, to the free determination of himself to Truth and Duty. The child is not a piece of wax to be moulded at another's pleasure, not a stone to be hewn passively into any shape which the caprice and interest of others may dictate, but a living, thinking being, made to act from principles in his own heart, to distinguish for himself between good and evil, between truth and falsehood ; to form himself, to be in an important sense the author of his own character." This most important view of the child should never forsake the teacher. He must not be treated as if he were unthinking matter. You can make a house, a ship, statue, without its own consent. The child has a will as well as yourselves. The great design of his being is that he should act for himself, and on himself. The great end in religious instruction, whether in the Sunday School or family, is not to stamp our minds irresistibly on the young, but to stir up their own.

Many of our Sunday Schools suffer, I fear, from a dearth of teachers, with the result that those who do undertake the work are often rather imposed on by having too much to do. In addition one must bear in mind that all extra duties about a church seem to fall, as a natural consequence, on the Sunday School teachers. They are regarded as maids-of-all-work to the rest of the body, and short of entering the pulpit, they are expected to fill the gap on all sorts of occasions and in all

emergencies. As far as my experience goes they are never found wanting. A good many members of our church, who could well spare the time to help in Sunday School, content themselves by saying that they are sure they would not make good teachers, and confine their interest in Sunday School work to pointing out (of course always after the event) what should or should not have been done on such and such an occasion. To our lay members of this description I would point out that an ounce of help is worth a pound of sympathy and a hundredweight of criticism, and that if at first they are not as completely successful as they themselves could wish, even their attempt to be useful would be a great encouragement to the existing workers, and that people never know what they can do if they never try. The attitude of such members reminds me of a story of two brothers who were both rather noted characters in our district a long time ago. One of these men at the time of the story lived on his brother's farm but did not work. The brother who owned the farm was sitting one day in the blacksmith's forge with a few of his " cronies " when the talk turned on Doctors, and the advisability of carrying out their instructions. After a good deal of discussion this worthy remarked " I know no man who carried out the Doctor's orders like my brother Jimmy." " How is that ? " asked some one " Well," says he, " some five and thirty years ago he had a bad attack of the ' rheumatism favour' and the Doctor at that time told him that he might never do a day's work in his life and—he never did for—he never tried."

In conclusion, Mr. Moderator, although I am well aware of my failure to speak very fully or instructively on this subject, I trust that my effort, at any rate, will arouse and stimulate other lay members who are more experienced and better qualified to speak on this subject than I am, to join in the discussions on future occasions, and give us the benefit of their ideas and experience.

ADDRESS BY REV. J. WORTHINGTON.

I shall confine my few remarks to a brief statement of *two urgent needs in connection with our Sunday School work.*

As I have been reading recently an interesting and valuable book on " The Church and the next Generation," by the Rev. Richard Roberts, of London. The general contention of the writer in the early chapters of the book is that we have not been attaching sufficient importance to the work of the Sunday School we have not been taking it seriously. Speaking generally, he says there has not been any very acute sense of responsibility concerning it. It has been managed and manned in a haphazard fashion. Its place in the church has been vague and undefined, and it has been the custom to think any willing person good enough to take a share in its work.

I doubt if any one of us will be prepared to question the truth of that statement. The more we think of the matter the more do we come to feel that we have not been taking the Sunday School seriously. Where is the church that can be said to have taken a real and intelligent interest in the work of the Sunday School ? I know of more than one church which has dropped its School entirely during a pulpit vacancy. Where is the minister or superintendent who has not been obliged to regard mere willingness as a sufficient qualification in a teacher, nay, have we not, as the writer I have referred to suggests, been content to think no other qualification essential ? It would be difficult to maintain that we have attached as much importance to the work of the Sunday School as to that of the Day School or the Church.

No one of course is specially to blame for this, certainly not the teachers whose labours and devotion to the School are deserving of the warmest acknowledgment. It all arises, as Mr. Roberts says, from our want of a clear, intelligent idea of the purpose of the Sunday School. We have not taken the Sunday School seriously because we have not clearly understood why it exists. Our first need then, one of the two needs I wish to emphasize, is that of a clear idea of the purpose of the Sunday School. What is it to do, and why is it to do it ? Perhaps we are able to state the idea more clearly to-day in consequence of the results of modern psychological research. Those who have been studying the psychology of religious experience say they have discovered two highly significant facts. First, that after the age of twenty-five or thereabouts, we tend to lose our susceptibility to religious influences ; second, that the period of greatest susceptibility is between the ages of about eight and twenty. Now these two facts are at first sight a little startling, but when we think about them a little we find that what they mean is that our capacity for religion, so far as the need of training is concerned is not different from our other powers. If we had not learnt to walk or think before reaching the age of 25 we should all agree that great difficulty would be experienced in learning either afterwards. The psychological facts to which I have referred mean that the same difficulty would be experienced in regard to religion. Only with great difficulty can a man become religious, learn to pray for instance, whose capacity for religion has not been developed in some degree before reaching the age of 25. Again, just as the best period in which to develop our physical and intellectual powers is early youth and adolescence, so is that the best period for the development of our religious powers. All of which means that our capacity for religion and the moral life needs the same careful training which we all admit is required for the growth of our physical and intellectual life. We do not come into the world with our religious powers fully matured. They need to be

trained and developed. Many people of course know this from their own experience, but the psychological " discoveries " I have mentioned serve to emphasize the fact and bring it into clearer relief, and so help us to define more intelligently perhaps than before the purpose of the Sunday School.

Much of our Sunday School work has been based on the assumption either that the child is a little sinner whose supreme need is conversion, or that he represents the type of Christian perfection, the ideal which is gradually lost as he grows into manhood. The truth is that the terms good and evil cannot, strictly speaking, be applied to children at all. We are born neither virtuous nor vicious. We are born with all our capacities existing potentially merely. The aim of the Sunday School therefore is to provide the social environment in which the child's moral and religious capacities shall find occasion to develop. It is only in contact with the world that his capacities grow. Which shall grow and how they shall grow will depend largely therefore upon the world, the *social* environment in which he lives. The aim of the Sunday School is to provide the right environment. Briefly, it is progressively to win the child for Jesus, to help him to learn to " glorify God and enjoy Him for ever," because that is both the highest thing he can do and the thing for which he is best fitted.

And this brings me to my second point which is that we need to do something to raise the standard of our teaching. If I have rightly defined the purpose of the Sunday School then a responsibility is laid upon us Sunday School teachers and workers for the discharge of which we cannot be too well equipped. Many teachers to-day are indeed feeling the need of a better equipment. Others are unwilling to undertake Sunday School duty from a feeling of incompetence. They would like the work, but they cannot regard such a responsibility lightly. All this points to the need of some form of training for Sunday School teaching. We need to know more about the method of teaching, more about the nature of the child. We need a better knowledge of the Bible which is the teachers' as it is the preachers' handbook. We need a closer acquaintance with the life and teaching of Christ. My suggestion is that, we arrange for classes and lectures for teachers, courses of study extending over two or three winters. This is what other churches are doing, and they are insisting upon attendance at the lectures as a condition of engaging in Sunday School work. What are we prepared to do? Something of the kind I have suggested I believe we must do. Are there not those amongst us who are willing to give time and thought to such a matter? Are not our teachers prepared to learn how to teach a little more efficiently? To say they are not is to say that our own form of faith does not possess the religious dynamic of Evangelicalism.

REPORTS

Ballyhemlin.—The subscribers of the Domestic Mission at Lower Fazeley Street, Birmingham, have invited the Rev. Charles Thrift, Ballyhemlin, to be missionary in succession to Rev. T. Pipe, who is resigning on account of failing health. Mr. Thrift has accepted the invitation, and expects to be able to enter upon his new duties in July.

Mountpottinger.—On Thursday, May 26th, a Miscellaneous Concert was given in the Schoolroom by the choir of the church, under the direction of the organist, Miss Morrow, A.L.C.M. Miss Morrow had arranged an excellent programme which was heartily appreciated by a good audience. Songs and duets were contributed by the following :—Misses Davidson, L. Cheshire, M. Wilson, Morrow, Donnen, Mrs. Worthington, Mrs. Beattie, Messrs. Beattie and Kennedy. Two violin solos were given by Mr. Fred Clarke, and two recitations by Miss Maggie Neill. The entertainment concluded with two short dramatic sketches by the following members of the choir :—Miss N. Allen, A. Neill, W. Wilson, A. Bailie, M. Neill and A. Allen.

Domestic Mission, Stanhope Street, Belfast.—The Ladies Committee are arranging for a Jumble Sale to be held in the early Autumn and will be grateful for gifts of miscellaneous articles for that purpose. A postcard addressed to the Missionary will ensure any parcels being called for.

Comber.—*Banquet to the Right Hon. W. Drennan Andrews.*—On the 27th of May last the Hall of the Unitarian Church was the scene of a remarkable gathering, The Right Hon. W. D. Andrews, LL.D., ex-Justice of the King's Bench Division of his Majesty's High Court of Justice in Ireland, was entertained to a banquet, upon his retirement from the Judicial Bench, by the residents of Comber and District. A large and distinguished company sat down to a well-served dinner with the Marquis of Londonderry in the chair. The toasts of " The King " and " The Queen and Queen-Mother, with the other members of the Royal Family " were proposed from the Chair. " The Lord Lieutenant and prosperity to Ireland " was proposed by the Right Hon. T. Sinclair, D.L. Lord Londonderry then proposed " Our Guest, the Right Hon. William Drennan Andrews, LL.D." The noble Chairman spoke of his close identification with Comber, and of his pleasure in being the mouthpiece of the town in its desire to honour a member of a family of which they were so justly proud. He recalled the time, in 1878, when they contested North Down in opposition to each other, and could never forget how his honoured friend, at the counting of the votes, came across the Courthouse to congratulate him upon his success. Such

generosity touched him deeply. From that time the Andrews family had shewn him the greatest kindness and affection, which he as heartily reciprocated. When Lord Lieutenant he had opportunity of learning the high esteem in which their guest was held by the Irish Bench and Bar, and he believed he was voicing their opinion when he said there was no Judge who, during the past quarter of a century, had retired from that position with greater *prestige*. None surpassed him in legal acumen and fairness. His knowledge of the law, his carefully balanced mind, his sense of justice, could be relied on. He was no popularity hunter, but displayed rare courage. He won the respect and admiration of all classes by the way he discharged his duties, and it was fitting that his friends of the town of Comber, which could claim him as a son, should meet to do him honour. In Mr. Andrews they had sent forth one of the greatest judges who ever adorned the Irish Bench, one who had honourably upheld the great traditions of the legal profession. Retiring too soon, he ventured to say, for our country's good, he has left a record for others to emulate; and the people of Comber were proud to have so brilliant an ornament of the law in their midst. The toast was most enthusiastically received.

On rising to reply the Right Hon. guest was received with prolonged applause, the whole company standing and cheering. He said they had conferred on him a valued honour of which his words were weak to express his high appreciation. Among the many and esteemed compliments which had been paid to him since his retirement none had given him more sincere gratification. Surrounded at that table by so many of his friends in the town in which he had been born and bred, and under the presidency of the noble Marquis it was peculiarly delightful to him. His Lordship in his gracious words had presented an estimate of him which he wished he could accept, but as that company had so generously responded to it he was at least assured that notwithstanding all shortcomings he had secured the approval of his friends and neighbours. Their action had given him what would be a cherished and joyous recollection to his life's end. Though time had laid but a light hand upon him he was not forgetful that the lengthening shadows of nearly fourscore years gave some warning of the close of the day. He felt indebted to them for the sunshine of that evening which would never fade from his recollection.

The Lord Mayor of Belfast proposed "Our County and District Councillors," to which the Right Hon. T. Andrews, D.L. and Mr. Hill Dickson, J.P. responded. The Rev. T. Dunkerley gave "The Press" to which Mr. J. R. Fisher, B.L., editor of the *Northern Whig*, and Mr. A. M'Monagle responded.

Dublin.—Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A., delivered a course of sermons during the past month, in Stephen's Green Church, on "Science, Life and Religion." The attendance of strangers was most encouraging, and several new names have been added to the list of members. It may be of interest to our readers to know that the evening Services will be continued during the month of July, so that those who are visiting the metropolis during the coming month will have an opportunity of co-operating with our friends in Dublin. The sermon, entitled, "Is Man Immortal?" preached by Rev. E. Savell Hicks, on Sunday, 19th ult., was printed in extenso in the *Daily Express* of the following day. We most heartily wish the Stephen's Green Congregation every success in spreading the doctrines of Unitarian Christianity.

Holywood.—We had a very pleasant social gathering in the Schoolroom, on Friday evening, June 17th. What brought so many to an indoor meeting on a fine summer evening was the desire to join in an expression of goodwill and God-speed to our good friend Miss Clara M. Patterson who ere this appears in print will be married to Rev. Eustace Thompson of Cairncastle. After light refreshments had been served the Rev. G. Leonard Phelps spoke in high praise of the sterling qualities and splendid services which have so endeared Miss Patterson to us all, then in a happy speech Mr. Omar C. Nelson, on behalf of the congregation, made the presentation of a gold watch-bracelet and a purse of gold. Miss Patterson in returning thanks spoke of her long connection with our Church and School, and the many happy hours which her work among us had brought, and gave yet another proof of her kindly interest by in turn making a presentation to the Church of two hymn boards, the work of the wood-carving class. The choir sang a part song and songs were rendered by Miss M'Cammon and Mr. James Shannon. Before the meeting ended Mr. Richard Patterson also thanked all who had assisted in the evening's entertainment, and in getting up the presentation to his daughter.

Unity Guild.—The Annual Service was held in Mountpottinger Church on Sunday, 22nd May, when the sermon was preached by the new President, Rev. A. O. Ashworth. In the course of his address the preacher said that many young people were misled by outward shows, and that they should be warned against them by those of riper experience. If man's highest thought of life was to be only a physical one why, he asked, should such brains and mind have been given to him? Was it that the lower elements might reap further harvest? He judged that one of the highest achievements a young man or woman could attain was to find their best friend. Miss Mabel Reynolds (of Liverpool) contributed a solo in her best style. The collection, which was on behalf of the Ulster Women's and Children's Hospital, realised £1 2s. 3d. On the Saturday previous the first excursion of the season took place in delightful weather.

About 50 made the journey to Newtownards where the party was met by Rev. R. M. King, who afterwards conducted them to Scrabo. The ascent was made in comfortable time and the more active members subsequently climbed the tower, the better to enjoy the splendid views obtainable from this eminence. After resting a while the descent was made and on arrival at the Queen's Cafe full justice was done to a substantial tea.

ECHOES.

At the Annual Meeting of the Congregational Union in May, the representative body of the Congregational Church in England, it was learned that a decrease in church membership had taken place during the previous twelve months to the extent of 2,500. This indicates a serious state of affairs. Many other religious bodies report similarly. How far the growing habit of Sunday visiting, and Sunday amusements are answerable for this it is impossible to say, but I fear they are causing the decay of the old respect and reverence for the Sabbath, and for attendance at religious services and Sunday Schools. It will be a bad day for the British Empire when Sunday is thought no more of, and is not distinguished from the other days of the week. At one end of the scale we have rough and rowdy Sunday footballers, and at the other highly respectable Sunday golfers. Both are doing their best to deprive the world about them of a day of rest, a day of spiritual renovation and recreation of a most beneficial character, of a day that is at once staying and inspiring in its influence. May those wrongdoers soon see the errors of their ways.

* * *

The Unitarian Vans have again commenced to disperse the truths of the Unitarian gospel. They will traverse various parts of England and Scotland, and it will be the wish of every reader of *The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian*, that the proceedings connected with them will be orderly, that much good seed will be sown, and that it will fall into good ground. During last season, when the weather conditions were far from propitious, there were 537 meetings, with an aggregate attendance of about 192,000 persons, which gives an average of over 357 for each meeting. There were 800 books sold, and upwards of 400,000 pamphlets and leaflets given away. The cost was £115 less than the previous year. It is sad to think that the lady who practically founded the Van Mission, Mrs. Bayle Bernard, should so soon afterwards have been taken from our midst. By her death the Mission has lost a devoted friend and a most generous supporter. She gave and equipped a van, and last year contributed £150 to the movement. May the workers of the Mission be animated and inspired by the spirit of Mrs. Bayle Bernard.

* * *

"The Liberal Christian League"—this is the new designation of what has hitherto been known as the Rev. R. J. Campbell's "Progressive League." Besides forming the rallying ground for many broadening spirits within the churches, it has doubtless been the rallying ground also for some who could not from one cause or another, connect themselves with existing religious bodies. It has also been felt that its aims were too indefinite, and as a consequence, that it attracted to itself very incongruous elements which have proved a source of weakness, rather than of strength. Attracted by the words "social service" some, whose socialism was of a destructive character, have found scope for airing their views, views that cast Christianity to the winds, and must result if put into practice in social anarchy, rather than in social amelioration. The new title and policy will most probably cause the withdrawal of this element which, while weakening the League numerically, will strengthen it for spiritual purposes, and for definite Christian duty. Evidently Mr. Campbell and his coadjutors desire to imbue the League with a more definitely Christian spirit and purpose. It appears that "Hyde Park orators" have endeavoured to identify Mr. Campbell with views and teachings with which he has no sympathy whatever. Some of these have doubtless been extremists, and it is better for the cause for which he stands that the League should be "above suspicion." "The first and foremost thing," Mr. Campbell says, "is to get men to realise the imperative need of living the spiritual life." Other things are subsidiary.

* * *

Respecting the Doncaster heresy case referred to in the June issue of this magazine, it may be stated that a legal decision has been given. Eight of the ten trustees were directly opposed to the minister and sought an injunction to prevent his occupation of the pulpit of the Congregational Church. The trust deed it appears is strongly Calvinistic, as the following brief extract shows:—"Such doctrines only shall be preached therein," it states "as are agreeable to the Catechism of the Assembly of Divines, and to the exclusion of Arminianism, Arianism, Socinianism, and all other doctrines contrary to those denominated Calvinistic." There are not many loopholes here for firing shots of the New Theology. It is believed that about five-sixths of the old Congregational or Independent trust deeds up and down the country are of a similar character, so that this step on the part of the Doncaster trustees will probably be of a very far-reaching character, and may necessitate legislation to prevent great unsettlement and confusion. The judge, when giving his decision, explained that the injunction was not on account of the minister's New Theology, but his inability to preach Calvinism. This judgment will surely cause some shaking of the dry bones in other places besides Doncaster, and lead to the relaxing of the "dead hand." We know noth-

ing of this theological slavery in connection with our Non-Subscribing trust deeds. Let us be thankful that such is the case.

* * *

In his sermon, preached on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in Whit week. the Rev. J. J. Wright, quoting from the Rev. Richard Roberts, gave expression to some striking facts respecting Sunday Schools. While four out of every five children pass through the Sunday Schools of the land, only one out of every five adults is afterwards connected with congregational life ! This is a sad and strange result following the anxiety, the effort, the self-sacrifice of 710,000 Sunday School teachers. Here is a vast army of unpaid workers, giving week by week, and year by year, the best that is within them, with results that are apparently so lamentable. It is very sad and very discouraging, and yet the gracious endeavours of these hundreds of thousands of teachers must—it would be rank moral heresy not to believe it—in some way or other, be fruitful of good. How much of evil might there be but for it ? The pregnant thought, the happy incident, the apt illustration, the earnest word, heard in class, must surely have some influence on life. Would that there were more Sunday School fire in Ireland ; that we had much more of it in the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, that our young of all classes knew something of the Bible and of the Non-Subscribing principles for which the church stands. Too often, the differences between ourselves and other denominations could not be stated, nor the principles for which we stand, and why they should be preferred to any other around us, defined. Let a new leaf be turned over, and a new chapter be begun, dealing with this important matter.

* * *

There is much ado just now about the terms of the Royal Declaration, the Roman Catholics having denounced certain of them and demanded their exclusion. While very earnestly and very religiously doing this, they seem to have completely ignored the many offensive expressions their church has used against the faith of Protestants. When the young Queen of Spain was initiated into the Roman Catholic Church (I speak from recollection only) the expressions used respecting the faith of Protestants were truly disgraceful. It seemed as though the young queen was prepared at the word of command to send all and sundry to hell for a husband—a royal one of course. Not for a husband more valuable than a Spanish prince, would I have consented to a daughter sending her family and friends to hell. But I suppose what was done was all in the way of royal marital business, and so was allowed to pass. As a sign of the superiority of Roman Catholic doctrines, Protestants are denounced to all intents and purposes, and impolitely informed that hell is the proper place for them ; that Roman Catholic power in a state is higher than the civil power, and has the right to decree death and perdition to heretics, that is, to all beyond the bounds of this presumptuous and arrogant church. For people who are identified with such teaching to cry so loudly when the term idolatrous is applied to some of their doctrines, is, to speak very mildly, rather inconsistent. Truly, theology warps the moral judgment of some people, so that what is wrong, barbarous in others, is infallibly right in themselves. Let us have a change, a perfectly safe one, in the Declaration by all means, but let the Roman Catholics at the same time, delete from their ordinances, encyclicals and instruction books, all persecuting and exterminating references to Protestants. There can never be Christian peace until both parties are above sending each other to hell.

* * *

The Christian Commonwealth (a newspaper identified with the New Theology movement) recently chided the Rev. Dr. Horton, a prominent London Congregational minister, for speaking disrespectfully of Unitarianism. In referring to its doctrines he used the expressions " frugal fare " and " chilly embers." These expressions are characterised as " dangerous," that they " wound friends " and can " have no justifiable application to men like Channing, Martineau, Stopford Brooke, or James Drummond. When we are singing " Nearer, my God to Thee," or " In the Cross of Christ I glory," we do not feel that we are in touch with " chilly embers." These hymns were written by Unitarians, and it would not be easy to measure the intellectual illumination and spiritual fervour, which are now part of the life-energy of the general Christian community, and which have been contributed by the leaders of this denomination. It is to be hoped Dr. Horton will note this gentle castigation and mend his manners.—W.S.S.

Baptism.

SHANNON.—On June 5th, Jane, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Shannon, jun., Woodvale Terrace, Holywood.

Marriage.

THOMPSON—PATTERSON.—June 28th, at the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast, by the Rev. William Napier, of Clough, Co. Down ; the Rev. Eustace Thompson, of Cairncastle, Co. Antrim, son of the late James Thompson, Hampstead, London, to Clara Maud, daughter of Richard Patterson, J.P., of Kilmore, Holywood, Co. Down.

Printed by J. W. Boyd, 2, Union Street (first door from Donegall Street), Belfast. May also be had from Mr. Eustace Gordon, the Depository, Rosemary St., Belfast ; and from Rev. A. Turner, Templepatrick, to whom all communications respecting the Magazine should be addressed. Business Agent :—Rev. George J. Slipper, The Manse, Newry, Co. Down.

Ulster Unitarian Christian Association,

35, Rosemary Street, Belfast.

Business Hours—9 till 6. **Hon. Secretary—Rev. J. A. KELLY.**
Saturdays—9 till 2. **Assist. Secretary—Rev. G. J. SLIPPER.**

THE DEPOSITORY is open daily for the sale of Unitarian Literature, including the publications of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, S. School Association, Manchester District S. School Association, and American Unitarian Association. Tracts and Pamphlets expository of Unitarian Principles may be had free on application, or will be sent by post to enquirers if stamped envelope is enclosed with application.

A large assortment of Bibles and Hymn Books always in stock; also a large selection of Books by popular authors, suitable for Home Reading and School Prizes.

Books at Lowest Discount Prices for Cash.
Any Book not in stock will be procured on shortest notice.

N.B.—To enable the Committee to carry on its important work, new and increased Subscriptions are earnestly solicited, and should be sent to
Mr. C. J. M'KISACK, Hon. Treasurer, 35, ROSEMARY ST., BELFAST.

Books of Liberal Religion, People's Editions, 6d. each net. By Post, 8d.

The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles for English Readers. A Translation with Introduction and Notes by James Edwin Odgers, M.A., D.D.
The Bible: What it is and is not. By Joseph Wood.
Endeavours after the Christian Life. First and Second Series. Two Volumes. By James Martineau, LL.D., D.C.L., D.D.
The Perfect Life: Twelve Discourses. By William Ellery Channing, D.D.
God and the Soul: Fundamental Religion. By Richard A. Armstrong, B.A.
The Passing and the Permanent in Religion. By Minot J. Savage, D.D.
The First Three Gospels: Their Origin and Relations. With a new Chapter on the Historical Value of the Gospels. By J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., D.D., D.Litt.
The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in its Relation to Modern Thought and Knowledge. By Charles Beard, B.A., LL.D.
The Soul: Its Sorrows and its Aspirations. By Francis William Newman. With Memoir and Introduction by Charles B. Upton, B.A., B.Sc.
Materialism and Atheism Examined. By James Freeman Clarke, D.D. With an Introduction by Sydney H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc.
The Religious Ideas. By the late William Johnson Fox, M.P. With a brief Sketch of his Life.

Book Room, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.

Artistic Wall Papers for 1910.

Latest Designs. Raised Materials, &c.

All Branches of House & Church Decorations under personal supervision.

AGENT FOR HALL'S WASHABLE DISTEMPER.

JOHN THOMPSON, 60 Hill St., Newry.

Telephone No. 50. Telegraphic Address: "Thompson, Painter, Newry."